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Muscle Shoals Baptist Association

v. 1. 1850

v. 2. 1854

v. 3. 1855

v. 4. 1858

v. 5. 1859

v. 6. 1861

v. 7. 1867

v. 8. 1871

v. 9. 1885

v. 10. 1887

v. 11. 1888

v. 12. 1891

v. 13. 1892

v. 14. 1893

v. 15. 1895

v. 16. 1896

v. 17. 1897

v. 18. 1898

v. 19. 1899

v. 20. 1900

MINUTES

OF THE

FORTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

Missle Shoals Baptist Association.

HELD WITH THE

MOULTON CHURCH,

LAWRENCE COUNTY, ALABAMA.

From the Fourth to the Seventh of October, 1867.

TUSCUMBIA, ALABAMA.

SHACKELFORD & CO., PRINTERS.

1867.



MINUTES.

The Muscle Shoals Baptist Association met with the Moulton church, on Friday the 4th day of October, 1867, being its 48th annual session. The former Moderator, Elder J. Gunn, called the body to order. The former clerk being absent, Elder J. C. Roberts was appointed Clerk *pro tem*. L. D. Massengale and Elder J. Shackelford were appointed as reading clerks. The letters from the various churches were then presented and read, and the names of messengers enrolled.

Elder J. Gunn was elected Moderator, and Elder J. C. Roberts Clerk.

The following committees were then announced by the Moderator:

On Arrangement: W. F. Orr, J. Kitchens, W. A. Gilbert.

On Devotional Exercises: The delegates of the Moulton church, Wm. Callahan and W. W. Pearson.

The committee of Arrangement reported the order of previous meeting, which was concurred in.

On motion, petitionary letters were called for, when the following were presented:

A letter from Russellville, Franklin county, by the hands of Elder R. J. Jennings, G. W. Hurley and J. C. Vincent.

A letter from Mount Moriah, by the hands of W. H. Bryan and J. McDaniel.

A letter from New Prospect, Winston co., by the hands of Wm. Godsey, John Godsey and James Hood.

A letter from Mt. Nebo, by the hands of D. M. Chambliss, W. A. Thompson, J. W. Pounders.

The following committees were then announced:

On Sabbath Schools; Elder Jos. Shackelford, S. M. Steenson and J. W. Herring.

On Documents; R. J. Jennings, Hill, Wm. Hightower.

On State of Religion; J. N. Thompson, M. A. Verser.

On Finance; C. Gibson and J. D. Inman.

On Domestic Missions; Elder R. J. Jennings, L. D. Massengale.

On Education; J. B. Speake, W. A. Gilbert.

A committee was appointed on the state of the Baptist Female Institute at Moulton, as follows: J. Gunn, C. Gibson, W. W. Pearson, L. D. Massengale, W. F. Orr, and J. Shackelford.

Called for letters of correspondence, upon which one was received from the Liberty Association, by the hand of A. Houk, who was invited to a seat with us.

The Association then adjourned to half past eight o'clock, Saturday morning. Prayer by J. Kitchens.

At night, Elder J. Gunn delivered an Introductory by special appointment.

Saturday morning 8 1/2 o'clock. Met pursuant to adjournment.—Prayer by Elder Wm. Stockton. Read and corrected Minutes of the previous day.

The Committee on the State of Religion reported as follows:

Your committee on the State of Religion beg leave to submit the following report: On examining the letters from the various churches, we find very cheering news to every christian. There have been many conversions in the bounds of the Association during the present year; we also find the aggregate of accessions to the different churches to be five hundred and two.

Brethren, we should feel very grateful to God for the great work of converting many souls: in reclaiming many sinners from the way of darkness and making them the children of light. May this glorious work continue until the whole world shall be converted to God.

Respectfully,

JAMES N. THOMPSON, Chairman.

The Association then appointed messengers to corresponding Associations, as follows:

To Warrior River; Elders H. A. Verser and A. W. Nunn;

To Liberty; Jos. Shackelford and J. Y. Shoemaker;

To Bear Creek; Jos. Shackelford, J. Sherrel, W. W. Pearson, R. J. Jennings, J. D. Inman.

To the General Association of North Alabama; Jos. Shackelford, L. D. Massengale, J. D. Inman, W. A. Gilbert, C. Gibson, R. J. Jennings, J. Gunn, M. A. Verser, J. C. Vincent, T. Jones, M. W. Mays, J. Y. Shoemaker, Z. Freeman.

On motion, the District meetings in the bounds of this Association were discontinued.

The following resolution was then offered by Elder Jos. Shackelford, and adopted: *Resolved*, That the 21st day of November proximo be set apart as a day of thanksgiving and prayer to God for his spiritual and temporal blessings during the past Associational year.

Br. L. D. Massengale offered a resolution recommending the Christian Herald to the favorable consideration and reception of the Baptists of North Alabama, as well as throughout the land; which was adopted.

Report on Documents called for and presented as follows:

Your committee on Documents report that they find nothing of importance except the request of Hopewell and Shiloh churches, desiring the Association to meet with them at its next session.

Respectfully submitted,

R. J. JENNINGS, Chairman.

On motion, it was resolved that this Association hold its next session with the Hopewell church, Morgan county, commencing on Friday before the first Sabbath in October, 1868. Elder Jos. Shackelford to preach the

Introductory, Elder R. J. Jennings Alternate. L. D. Massengale to write the Circular Letter.

The Association then called for the reading of the Circular Letter, written by Elder J. Gunn, which was read and received, and transferred to the Editor of the Christian Herald for publication.

Upon motion, in the absence of a letter from Mt. Zion in M., Elder J. N. Thompson was received as a delegate from said church.

Br. G. W. Hargett then presented the following query: "Has a majority of a church the right to exclude a member from her fellowship; if so, has a majority the right to restore to fellowship?" which was answered as follows: A majority may exclude, but to receive or restore a member the church should be unanimous.

The chairman of the committee on Education offered his report, which, after an animated discussion, was adopted, as follows:

The subject of Education at this time is of vital importance, and demands our serious consideration, and calls for a united effort of all classes to engage heartily in the great and noble cause of disseminating knowledge among the masses. Society is being revolutionized. The form of religious worship probably may be changed. The fundamental principles of free government are passing through a fearful ordeal; the end of which, the profoundest statesman and noblest patriot cannot see. In a truly Democratic government, in which the people rule, the masses should be so educated that they can understand the principles of government; otherwise they will be misled by demagogues and fanatics, and run into despotism and anarchy. We consider that a common and practical education is in the reach of almost every individual, if parents will discharge their duty. We would urge, therefore, that primary and common schools be built up and fostered in every neighborhood; in these, the mind is trained and its powers developed; here the initiatory steps are taken that will result in much and lasting good, as the mind expands, the desire for knowledge will increase, until the aspiring youth will be fitted and qualified for all stations of life. We believe that more good will be accomplished, in the main, in the common English schools, than in any other, as all the classes may be beneficiaries of them; yet we would encourage high schools, in which the classics and sciences are taught to perfection. We should have a learned Ministry who can preach the Gospel with power and demonstration, and who can meet error in all its boisterousness and deformity, and the way to secure this object is to have an enlightened and intelligent laity. The happiness of individuals, the good of society, the prosperity and stability of a government, the advancement of a pure and undiluted christianity, all depend much upon education. We deem it therefore, of the highest importance that our minds, energies and resources be directed to that object.

Respectfully,

J. B. SPEAKE, Ch'm.

The Association then adjourned to half past one o'clock, this evening. Prayer by Elder Wm. Hightower.

The President of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Female Institute, at Moulton, presented his annual report, which, upon motion, was received, and referred to a special committee, viz: J. D. Innan, W. F. Orr, and J. W. Herring; after which it was adopted, as follows:

The Trustees of the Baptist Female Institute, at Monilton, Ala., most respectfully submit the following as their twelfth report: The last report on the affairs of the Institute laid before your venerable body at its meeting with the Mount Pleasant church, in Lawrence county, Ala., in October, 1866, and the Board now beg leave to refer to that report as containing a proper statement of the interests and condition of the school up to that date. Since then there has been but little change.—The valuable property of the Institute remains about as it was then, and the necessity of contributions for its future protection, are about the same. The roof of the building is still insecure, and the Board must look to the kind and ever ready assistance of the Association for the means to mend it. The sum mentioned in their report of last year, is still deemed sufficient. It was then put down at twenty-five dollars. This sum is still needed, and still estimated to be enough.

On the 12th day of December, 1866, the Board accepted the proposition of Thos. M. Peters and Andrew J. Harris, to take charge of the Institute school, for the year 1867. The school was opened under this arrangement, on the 14th day of January last, and continued until the end of the past session, in June of this year, and notwithstanding the tuition fees were greatly reduced, the attendance at the commencement of the second session was too small to promise any prospect of remuneration, and the effort was abandoned. Since then there has been no school at the Institute conducted under the immediate supervision of the Board; though Miss Gewin has been permitted to occupy the building for a private school under her own management until the Board should need it again. Notwithstanding the inability of the Board to keep a school in operation at the Institute since the end of the war which would be commensurate with the high and anxious expectation of its benevolent founders, yet they still hope that the renewal of prosperity in our beloved country will not be permitted to take place and leave this important aid to education to languish, but that our school will be restored to its former usefulness and success; and the Board fervently pray if the cry of despair anywhere escapes us, that it shall not be heard first among the friends of learning and piety and from schools. The names of the members of the Board are, Thos. M. Peters, President; Darius Lynoh, Secretary; R. O. Pickett, Treasurer; and W. A. Gilbert, J. B. Speake, J. Y. Shoemaker, J. C. Orr, Josephus Shackelford, M. W. Maye, C. Gibson, B. F. Walker, M. Wert, and Daniel G. Johnson; of these the terms of Messrs. Gilbert, Mays, Walker and Gibson expire in 1867. All of which is most respectfully submitted.

THOS. M. PETERS, President Board.

Report of committee on report of Board of Trustees. We recommend the Board to use their best efforts to procure a competent corps of teachers as early a day as possible, and that they exert their efforts and influence in every possible way to build up the character and supply the wants of the Institute.

We recommend the following brethren to be appointed on the Board: W. B. Gilbert, M. W. Mays, Charles Gibson and B. F. Walker. Report received and adopted.

J. D. INMAN,
W. F. ORR,
J. W. HERRING.

The report on Domestic Missions was presented, which elicited some forcible remarks in its support from Elder R. J. Jennings, C. Gibson, J. B. Speake, L. D. Massongale, and the Moderator; after which it was adopted, as follows:

When we take a survey of the vast field of destitution within our Association, we feel the importance of praying the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into his vineyard, and we are convinced from the experience of the past, that the present agency plan is the best we can probably adopt for the future, and we recommend that the Executive Board employ at once, an efficient Missionary and

agent whose duty it shall be to take up subscriptions and collect money for the Domestic Mission cause; and at such time as they may think proper, to employ suitable ministers to travel in the different and respective districts of the Association.

Respectfully submitted, R. J. JENNINGS, Chairman.

The committee on Finance report as follows: Missionary fund from various sources, \$125 25; Minute fund, \$54 65. CHARLES GIBSON, Ch'n.

It should have been mentioned above, that pending the adoption of the report of the President of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Female Institute, at Moulton, the following subscription was raised for the purpose of repairing the Institute building: W. A. Gilbert, \$5, Charles Gibson, \$5, J. B. Speake, \$5, J. D. Inman, \$5, A. M. Stanley, \$5, J. N. Owen, \$5, W. F. Orr, \$5, J. C. Vincent, \$5, Richard Taliaferro, \$5, Thos. Masterson, \$5, L. D. Massengale, \$5, J. Y. Shoemaker, \$2 50, S. M. Steenson, \$2 50, James Gilbert, \$2 50, T. Jones, \$2 50, J. G. Dilleshaw, \$5.

Report of committee on Sabbath Schools presented as follows:

Your committee on the subject of Sabbath Schools would respectfully represent that it is a gratifying fact that the subject of Sabbath Schools is interesting our churches more than usual; we are pleased to see the churches awaking to their duty in this matter, and that they are organizing schools among them. This is right; many of our churches, however, are still inactive upon this subject, and do not seem to realize their responsibility to the rising generation. It is unnecessary for your committee to argue the importance and utility of Sabbath Schools, or to show that it is the duty of christians to encourage them; experience has proven the former, and our obligation to our children should be sufficient to urge us to the latter. Our Savior demands that we should do all we can to establish his cause and build up his kingdom. The Sabbath School is a powerful instrument in accomplishing this work; your committee is of the opinion that every church should have a Sabbath School. This can be done if the members of our churches, both old and young, will but do their duty. We would therefore urge upon all our churches which have not done so, to establish Sabbath Schools, keep them alive by all the members engaging in them. We would recommend as suitable helps to the Sabbath Schools, the Child's Delight, published at Macon, Ga., and Kind Words, published at Greenville, S. C. We think that every Sabbath School ought to be supplied with these papers; we would also state for the information of the churches, that Sabbath Schools can be supplied with books by the Southern Sabbath School Board, at Greenville, S. C., and the Southwestern Publishing House, at Memphis, Tenn.

Respectfully submitted, JOS. SHACKELFORD, Ch'm.

The Secretary of the Executive Board presented their report as follows:

The Executive Board of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association would respectfully submit the following as a report of the Missionary labor during the past Association year. About the 15th day of October, 1865, the Board held a meeting to consider a proposal from Elder R. J. Jennings, of the Bear Creek Association, who was chosen as Missionary agent and minister for three months with a salary of \$125, on condition that he would be continued on same terms if he desired, and his success was such as to justify the Board in continuing him. The result was, that he has been continued the entire year, and we herewith submit a copy of his report:

Preached 115 sermons, delivered 94 exhortations, attended 73 prayer meetings, assisted in the ordination of 4 ministers and 2 deacons, assisted in 15 protracted meetings, witnessed 170 conversions, baptized 85 persons, witnessed 35 baptisms, raised by subscriptions for domestic missions about \$750, collected on subscrip-

tions \$165, sold books for Association to the amount of \$11 30 cents, gave books to young ministers to the amount of \$5 65 cents.

It may be put into the hands of our agent a number of denominational books which had been on hand for several years, valued at \$21 45 cents, \$14 50 cents of which he yet has on hand. About the 1st of December, 1866, on receiving an application from Elder M. A. Verser for permission to act as Missionary in the third district, it was assigned to him as a field of labor, giving him the pledges of all churches in that district except Hapewell, in Morgan county, and whatever he could collect, for his salary without any recourse on the Board or Association, a copy of whose report is herewith annexed:

Engaged eight months, preached one hundred and twenty-two sermons, delivered fifty-eight exhortations, attended thirty-two prayer meetings, two protracted meetings, baptized forty-one persons, ordained three deacons, raised by subscription \$252 65 cents, collected in cash \$71.

There were other applications for Missionary service, but the limited amount of means at the disposal of the Board rendered it impracticable to employ more agents. Considering the great success attending our Missionary efforts during this severe and trying year, may we not reasonably expect greater success in the future, with the same agents and zeal, if we will increase our contributions in the same proportion that our crops have been increased. We have great cause to be grateful for the blessings bestowed upon us this year as an Association, and heartily recommend the continuance of an Executive Board, composed of faithful and competent members as convenient, and effective agents in accomplishing the good work.

Respectfully,

CHAS. GIBSON, Ch'm.

D. G. JOHNSON, Secretary.

On motion, brethren Darius Lynch and B. F. Walker were appointed on the Executive Board, instead of brethren Johnson and Shackelford, resigned.

Br. C. Gibson offered the following resolution: *Resolved*, That this Association tender their most hearty thanks to the citizens of Moulton and vicinity for their kind hospitality to this body during its session.

On motion, the Association adjourned to meet immediately after services to-night. Prayer by the Clerk.

Let pursuant to adjournment. Upon motion, Elder J. Shackelford was requested to print eight hundred copies of these Minutes.

At this time it was ascertained that the Minute fund sent up by the churches was insufficient, upon which the deficit was immediately made up by the delegates.

Elder R. J. Jennings was appointed to distribute Minutes in the First District, W. A. Gilbert in the Second, and Elder J. Gunn in the Third. It was ordered that the Clerk be allowed \$25 00 for his services.

The Treasurer, Br. I. N. Owen, made his report, as follows:

	ISAAC N. OWEN, Treasurer,	
1867	In account with Muscle Shoals Association,	
Oct.	To amount in my hands last Association,	
"	To amount received of brother E. Wise,	
"	To amount received of brother G. B. Fuller,	

Dr.
\$88 85
10 00
3 00

\$101 85

Cr. by amount paid for printing Minutes,

\$0 00

Balance due as above,

\$41 85

To amount interest on F. O. Owen's bequest,

20 00

Amount due Association,

\$61 85

Br. I. N. Owen was re-appointed Treasurer of this Association.

Upon motion, the Association adjourned to meet to-morrow, after the 11 o'clock sermon; at which time we met, after an interesting discourse from Elder J. Gunn, on the way of access to God. A parting hymn was then sung, while the Delegates took their leave of each other, some, perhaps, for the last time in this life.

J. GUNN,

J. C. ROBERTS, Clerk.

Moderator.

[illegible]